



CALIFORNIA WorksWell

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State Employee American Heart Walk 2003

THE 3RD ANNUAL STATE EMPLOYEE AMERICAN HEART WALK AND HEALTH FAIR held at the State Capitol on September 4th was a great success! More than 2,500 people attended the event and 53 state departments formed teams to participate with almost 1,400 registered walkers who raised over \$90,000.

The Department of Personnel Administration (DPA) jointly sponsors this event with the American Heart Association (AHA) to help encourage physical activity for state employees through participation in a one-mile walk around the Capitol and to provide a variety of useful health information and screenings at the health fair. The event also offers an opportunity to support important research and education for heart disease and stroke and a chance to reach out to people

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Healing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

SOMEONE WHO HAS EXPERIENCED A TRAUMATIC EVENT, such as a car accident, military action, a terrorist attack, rape or some other act of violence, often suffers severe stress related to the incident. Many people recover on their own.

However, people who feel they're unable to regain control of their lives may have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Anyone who experiences several of the following symptoms may have PTSD and should seek professional help:

- Recurring thoughts or nightmares about the event
- Trouble sleeping
- Anxiety and fear
- Being on edge, easily startled or overly alert
- Feeling depressed, sad and having low energy
- Feeling "scattered" and unable to focus on work or daily activities; difficulty making decisions
- Feeling irritable, easily agitated or resentful
- Feeling emotionally "numb," withdrawn or disconnected from others
- Spontaneously crying, feeling a sense of despair and hopelessness
- Feeling extremely protective of, and fearful for, the safety of loved ones

Hints for Healing

■ **SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP RIGHT AWAY.** A therapist may prescribe medication and provide a safe place to talk about and learn to cope with the events that led to your PTSD.



- **BE PATIENT WITH YOURSELF.** Allow yourself to mourn the losses you've experienced.
- **TALK ABOUT IT.** People who have experienced tragedy need to work through their pain. Often this means telling the same story over and over.
- **EAT A HEALTHFUL DIET, GET ENOUGH SLEEP AND EXERCISE.**
- **JOIN A SUPPORT GROUP.** Being in a group with other people who have PTSD may help reduce isolation and rebuild your trust in others.
- **AVOID NEGATIVE COPING ACTIONS** such as using drugs or alcohol, workaholism, violent behavior and angry intimidation of others.

By Barbara Floria, the editor of Vitality. For more information, contact the PTSD Alliance at 877-507-PTSD or www.ptsdalliance.org.

in the know

Helpful Health Hints

>>Treating Smoke Inhalation

Take action if someone is suffering from mild smoke inhalation from a small house fire, poorly vented fireplace or grill. Symptoms include irritated eyes, coughing and mild weakness.

To treat:

- Get the victim into fresh air.
- Have the person sit down, then give him or her a glass of water.
- Place a cool wet cloth over the person's eyes and forehead.

If the person has more serious symptoms that include continued coughing or wheezing, difficulty breathing, choking, lightheadedness, ashes around the mouth or nose, weakness and lethargy:

- Loosen clothing around the neck and waist to make breathing easier.
 - Keep them warm to prevent shock.
- Have the person lie on his or her back with a pillow behind the head if breathing is labored.
- Call for emergency medical help.
 - Perform CPR if you're trained to do so and the person is having trouble breathing.



>>Creating a Family Medical Chart

Creating a medical chart for your family members can help them get treated properly, especially if a medical emergency occurs.

To make the chart, record the following information for each member in an accessible notebook or file folder:

- A list of drug and food allergies
- A list of medications, including the dosages and how often they're taken
- A list of all the person's doctors' names, addresses and phone numbers
- Brief medical history, including any chronic conditions
- Date of last tetanus shot and other immunizations
- The person's health plan phone number and member number

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before they become victims of heart attack or stroke.

The American Heart Association (AHA) is dedicated to increasing our knowledge of cardiovascular disease and stroke. The AHA funds grants for projects that focus on the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of heart disease and stroke.

Research funded by the AHA has yielded such discoveries as the pacemaker, bypass surgery, CPR, artificial heart valves and blood pressure medication...just to name a few. In addition, they provide educational programs to the community that emphasize healthy eating, smoking cessation, blood pressure monitoring and physical activity, and they also assist healthcare professionals to keep pace with the latest in prevention and treatment methods.

Thank you all for your continuing support for this and other health promotion education and activities held throughout the year for state employees. If you didn't have a chance to join us this time, watch for the announcement of next year's State Employee American Heart Walk. The event is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, September 2, 2004.

The California WorksWell newsletter is available for purchase by State departments through a master agreement secured by the Department of Personnel Administration. To purchase for your department, please contact:

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